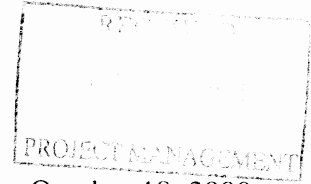




## INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM



**To:** Environmental Affairs Division (ENV)  
Attention: Jenise Walton

**Date:** October 18, 2000

**From:** Robert A. Appleton, P.E.  
Bryan Director of Transportation  
Planning and Development

**Subject:** Revised Categorical Exclusion Documentation  
IH 45 Frontage Road Conversion  
Walker County  
CSJ: 0675-06-081 and 0675-07-065

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Please find attached one copy of the revised categorical exclusion document for this project. The revisions, denoted in bold print, are in response to ENV's internal review. Also attached are a summary table showing the PST locations/regulatory numbers, the LPST locations/regulatory numbers, including their priority and status, and a map showing the location of the sites.

The public meeting summary will be forwarded when complete. If there are any questions or if additional information is needed, please contact Mr. Mike Carpenter at (979) 778-9766.

Attachments

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENT  
IH 45 Frontage Road Conversion  
0675-06-081, 0675-07-065  
Walker County

The Bryan District of TxDOT intends to convert the existing frontage roads for IH 45 in Huntsville to one-way operation. The study area for this project is from FM 1696, north of Huntsville, to Park Road 40, south of Huntsville. The project construction length is 14.768 km (9.177 miles), between approximately 1.45 miles north of SH 75 to approximately 2.55 miles south of the Goree overpass. The total estimated cost of the project is \$500,000 and will be funded from Work Program 0102, 2001 Interstate Rehabilitation. Project letting is scheduled for September 2002. A project location map, a topographical map, existing and proposed typical sections and an EIPC sheet are attached.

#### DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING FACILITY

IH 45 is a four-lane divided highway with two-way frontage roads. It is classified as an urban freeway or expressway. The existing frontage roads, both north and south bound, consist of 10 ft travel lanes with 4 ft shoulders. The existing entrance and exit ramps in the corridor are typically 18 ft wide, with four ramps being 28 ft wide. The current year traffic ranges from 19,840 to 29,040 vehicles per day. The estimated traffic count for the design year (20 years) ranges from 27,780 to 72,180.

#### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND NEED

This project will convert the IH 45 frontage roads to one-way operation. The project is required due to an increase in traffic and the need to reduce traffic conflicts. Two new ramps will be added and six ramps will be relocated and become slip ramps for one-way operation. These slip ramps will be located further from the intersections for better operation. The old ramps will be obliterated. The current SH 75 exit, northbound, will be replaced with an exit ramp further south and the frontage road will be connected to SH 75. **The work to improve the intersection was cleared under State Project 1791 FONSI on March 23, 1998. No new right of way is required and no utility adjustments are anticipated.**

#### 1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SURROUNDING TERRAIN AND LANDUSE

This project is located in two Natural Regions. The north side of IH 45 is located in the Oak Woodlands Natural Region and the south side of IH 45 is located in the Mixed Pine-Hardwood Forest Natural Region. This section of the roadway is located on Ferris-Annona-Houston Black soils and Depcor-Annona-Huntsburg soils. The Ferris-Annona-Houston Black soils are deep, loamy, clayey, gently sloping to gently rolling located on uplands. These soils have a fair openland wildlife potential, a good woodland wildlife potential, a poor to very poor wetland wildlife potential and a fair rangeland wildlife

potential. The Depcor-Annona-Huntsburg soils are deep, sandy and loamy, gently sloping to gently rolling located on uplands. These soils have a fair openland wildlife potential, a fair to good woodland wildlife potential and very poor wetland wildlife potential.

The main landuse is commercial. This accounts for 80% with other landuse types being state governmental offices and residential.

## 2.0 POTENTIAL SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

### 4.1 Community Impacts

Any regional or community growth in this area is expected to be minimal. No people, farms, or businesses will be displaced by this project, thus the effects or relocation need not be considered.

The proposed project will not affect, separate, or isolate any distinct neighborhoods, ethnic groups, or other specific groups.

A public meeting was held on October 21, 1999 in the City of Huntsville. The city is developing secondary street improvements, which will be completed before January 2001 on the west side of this project. The city street circulation on the east side of this corridor is sufficient to compliment one-way frontage roads. There may be some temporary inconvenience to the travelling public while they develop new travel patterns.

### 4.2 Economic Impacts

Employment and income effects of the proposed project will be limited to those associated with its construction. During actual construction, the project will enhance employment and incomes in the local community as construction related expenditures are spent and re-spent, but no long term consequences for employment opportunities or income are expected as a result of this project.

### 4.3 Traffic Handling

One of the most important considerations in the construction of a project is to provide safe passage of traffic with the minimum amount of inconvenience. For this project, a Traffic Control Plan will insure that traffic will be carried safely through the construction area.

A meeting between the City of Huntsville and TxDOT was held on April 6, 2000. The City endorses the one-way conversion of the frontage roads and is currently pursuing a program of parallel arterial roads to complement such a conversion. These parallel arterial roads will be constructed and in place by Spring 2001. The conversion to one-way frontage roads is beneficial for many reasons. With the conversion to one-way, there will be less turning movements and a reduction of traffic congestion at the SH 30/IH 45

Interchange. The one-way conversion on the IH 45 feeder roads will help decrease the number of vehicular accidents and provide for better traffic operations at signalized intersections.

There will be no disruption of city, county, or social services due to this construction project.

#### 4.4 Construction Impacts

During construction, all federal, state, and local laws will be complied with and current acceptable practices of TxDOT with respect to erosion control, noise control, and air quality will be adhered to. This will be insured by monitoring during construction.

#### 4.5 Historic and Archeological Preservation

A review of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the list of State Archaeological Landmarks, and the Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHL) indicated that no historically significant properties have been previously documented within the area of potential effects (APE).

A windshield survey identified, no buildings or structures over the 50 years of age within or immediately adjacent to the project area. In accordance with the Programmatic Agreement (PA) between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Texas Historical Commission (THC), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Memorandum of Understanding between TxDOT and THC, TxDOT will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding the project's potential to affect significant sites. In accordance with the PA, this project will be placed on the "Monthly List" for SHPO concurrence.

A TxDOT archaeologist will evaluate the potential for intact archaeological deposits in the area of potential effect. In accordance with the PA among TxDOT, Texas Historical Commission, FHWA, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, TxDOT will consult with SHPO to determine the project's potential to affect archaeological historic properties or State Archaeological Landmarks. If evidence of archaeological deposits is encountered during construction, work in the immediate area will cease and TxDOT archaeological staff will be contacted to initiate accidental discovery procedures under the provision of the PA.

#### 4.6 Impact on Section 4(f) Properties

It has been determined that this project will not involve any lands such as historical, parkland, recreational areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges requiring the submission of a Section 4(f) statement.

#### 4.7 Threatened or Endangered Species

Due to the urban build-up of the area, the project will not jeopardize any threatened or endangered species as identified under the Endangered Species Act, nor will it endanger or adversely modify the critical habitat of such species.

The Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*) is an indigenous species of Walker County. It is found in open, mature pine forests throughout the southeastern U.S. It is the only North American woodpecker species that excavates its cavity exclusively in living pine trees. It typically chooses old pines (80+ years) infected with a fungus called *heart rot*, which decays the inner wood of the tree. There are no areas of potential habitat along the project area.

#### 4.8 Wildlife Habitat

All work will be performed within the existing ROW. No mature woody vegetation will be impacted by this project. All vegetation in the project area has been introduced and is regularly maintained.

In accordance with Presidential Executive Memorandum (EM) on Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscape Practices and Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species, construction practices that minimize adverse effects to habitat will be utilized. In order to avoid impacts from invasion of non-native plant species, post-construction landscaping will utilize only regionally-native plants.

#### 4.9 Jurisdictional Waters

Walker County is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program. The base flood plain elevation is 82.6 m (217 ft). The hydraulic design for this project will be in accordance with the current TxDOT and Highway Administration (FHWA) design policies and procedures. No jurisdictional waters or wetlands are associated with this project work; therefore, no U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Nationwide Permits are required. No channel modification is proposed in connection with this project.

#### 4.10 Water Quality

Since the project will not disturb more than 2.02 ha (5 ac), TxDOT compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Industrial Activity is not required.

This project is not located in the proximity of any public water supply intake and will not result in degradation of water quality, changes in ground water or storage, and will not significantly affect the water table.

Water runoff from this project and associated drainage features would enter the Trinity River Basin by way of the Trinity River from Livingston Dam in Polk/San Jacinto County to a point 1.8 KM upstream of Boggy Creek in Houston/Leon County, up to the normal pool elevation of 131 ft. This segment number is 803, on the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission's Identification Map of the Trinity River Basin. This segment is designated for contact recreation, high quality aquatic habitat, and public water supply. The water quality of the waters of the State shall be maintained in accordance with all applicable provisions of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards. Restoration of the site after construction is completed and the prevention and/or control of the discharge materials during construction are concerns to be addressed to protect the quality of the waters of the state. Standard construction specifications and special specifications will be enforced to control water pollution during construction. The amount of disturbed earth is to be limited so that potential for excessive erosion is minimized and sedimentation outside the ROW is avoided.

Disturbed areas will be restored and stabilized as soon as the construction schedule permits. Temporary seeding will be considered when large areas of disturbed ground will be left bare for a considerable amount of time. When appropriate, temporary erosion and sedimentation controls will be in place prior to the initiation of construction. Permanent soil erosion control features will be considered in the early stages of the contract. All material removal and/or disposal by the contractor will be in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and will not degrade water quality.

#### **4.11 Hazardous Materials**

**A list search was performed by the Bryan District Environmental Section on the National Priority List (NPL), Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation Liability Information System (CERLIS), Texas Superfund, Leaking Petroleum Storage Tank (LPST), Registered Storage Tank (RPST), Municipal Solid Waste Landfill List, and Resource Compensation and Recovery Act (TSD Facilities). Documentation of the initial site assessment is maintained in the Bryan District project files.**

**Within the project limits there are seven registered petroleum storage tank (RPST) facilities. Six of the registered facilities are listed as LPST sites. The site visit did not reveal any other abandoned and/or active gasoline service stations. A summary table showing the PST locations/regulatory numbers, the LPST locations/regulatory numbers, including their priority and status is attached. Also attached is a map showing the labeled (site type and regulatory number) location of the sites.**

**As previously stated, right of way acquisition or easements are not required for this project. Due to the scope of work, no significant excavation (1.5 to 2 foot depth maximum) is anticipated. Therefore, it is not anticipated that petroleum contamination will be encountered during construction and no further investigation appears necessary.**

**Any anticipated hazardous materials and/or petroleum contamination encountered during construction would be handled according to applicable federal and state regulations per TxDOT Standard Specifications.**

#### 4.12 Air Standards

This project is in an area that is in attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards; therefore, the transportation conformity rule does not apply. The proposed action's traffic projection will not increase the traffic, but help alleviate traffic congestion. There will be no need for an air quality model for this action.

#### 4.13 Noise Standards

This project is not on a new location, it does not alter either the horizontal or vertical alignment, and it does not increase the number of through-traffic lanes; therefore, a traffic noise analysis is not required by Federal Highway Administration Regulation 23 CFR 772 of TxDOT's 1996 Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise.

Noise associated with the construction of the project is difficult to predict. Heavy machinery, the source of noise in construction, is constantly moving in unpredictable patterns. However, construction normally occurs during daylight hours when occasional loud noises are more tolerable. No extended disruption of normal activities is expected.

Provisions will be included in the plans and specifications that require the contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and proper maintenance of muffler systems.

### 3.0 CONCLUSION

The studies and evaluations performed thus far in the project planning indicate that the proposed improvement is a categorical exclusion.

### REGISTERED PETROLEUM STORAGE TANKS

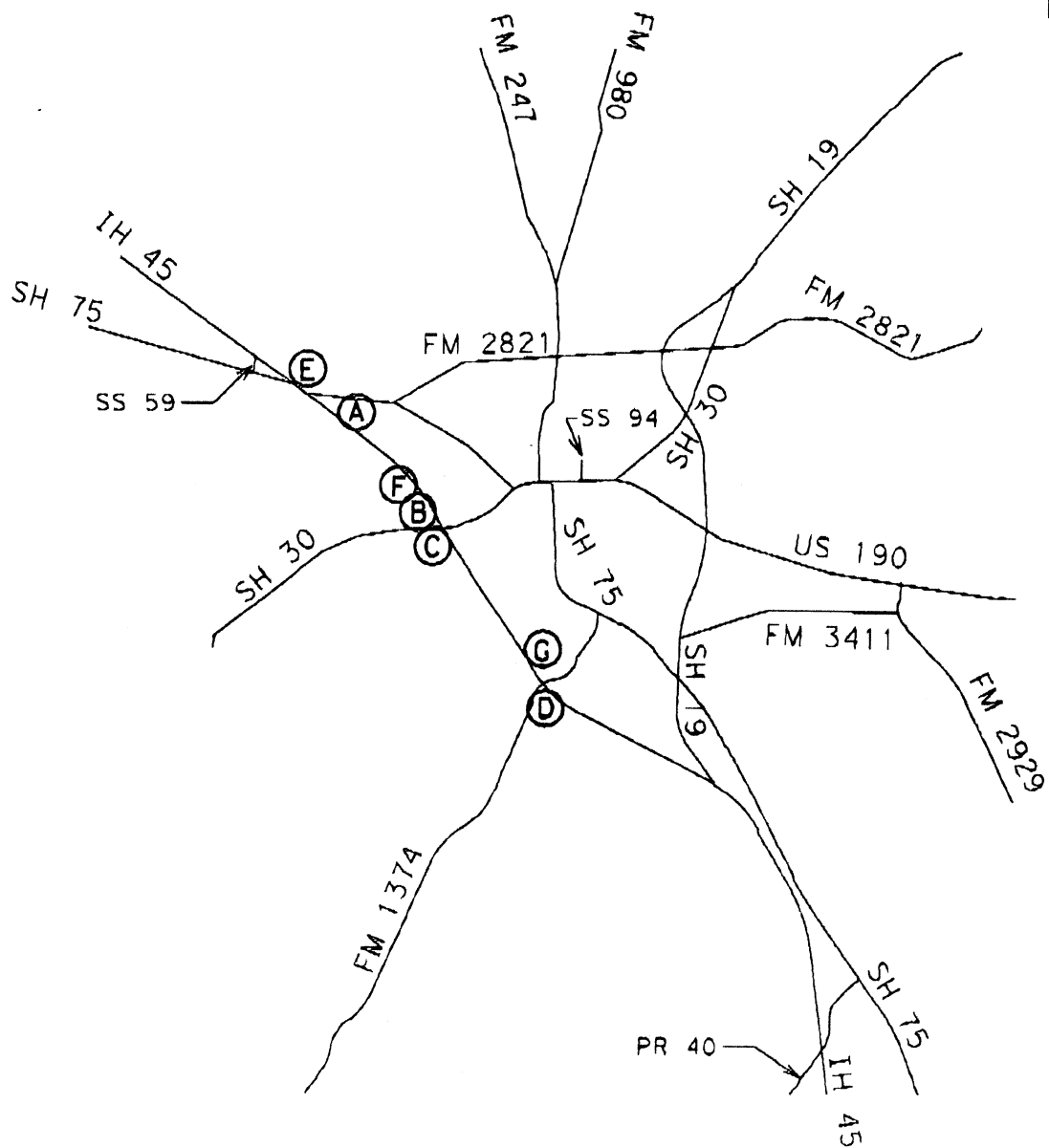
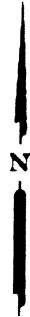
		Location	Regulatory #	Priority	Status
A	TX DPS	501 IH 45	97004	n/a	n/a
B	West Hill Exxon (#6-7360)	1408 IH 45 & SH 30	97959	n/a	n/a
C	Star Enterprise (Texaco)	1606 IH 45	102954	n/a	n/a
D	Diamond Shamrock (#348)	3294 IH 45	97956	n/a	n/a
E	Huntsville TxDOT	IH 45 E.	97004	n/a	n/a
F	Flintex Oil Co.	1404 IH 45	99452	n/a	n/a
G	Henry Joe Motors	3119 IH 45	102352	n/a	n/a
G	Henry Joe Motors	3119 IH 45	110690	n/a	n/a

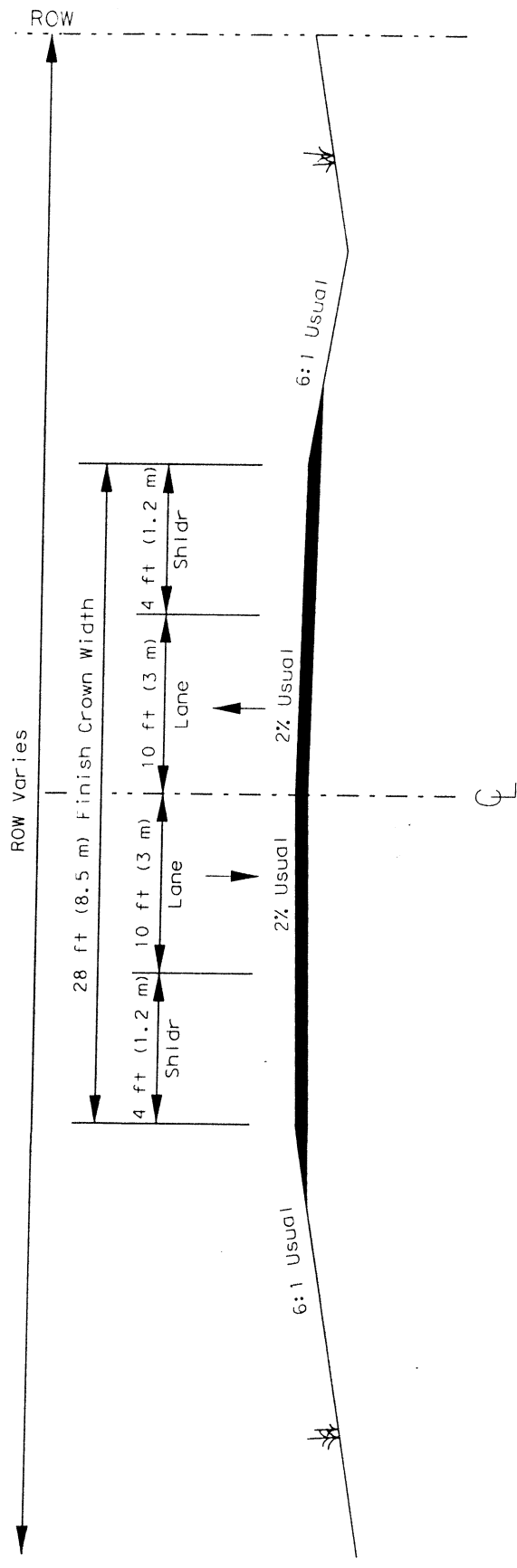
### LEAKING PETROLEUM STORAGE TANKS

		Location	Regulatory #	Priority	Status
A	TX DPS	501 IH 45	113887	4.2	6A
B	West Hill Exxon (#6-7360)	1408 IH 45 & SH 30	97959	4A	6A
C	Star Enterprise (Texaco)	1606 IH 45	102954	4.1	2B
D	Diamond Shamrock (#348)	3294 IH 45	97956	6	6A
E	Huntsville TxDOT	IH 45 E.	97004	4.2	5A
G	Henry Joe Motors	3119 IH 45	102352	5	6A
G	Henry Joe Motors	3119 IH 45	110690	4.2	6A



# HUNTSVILLE

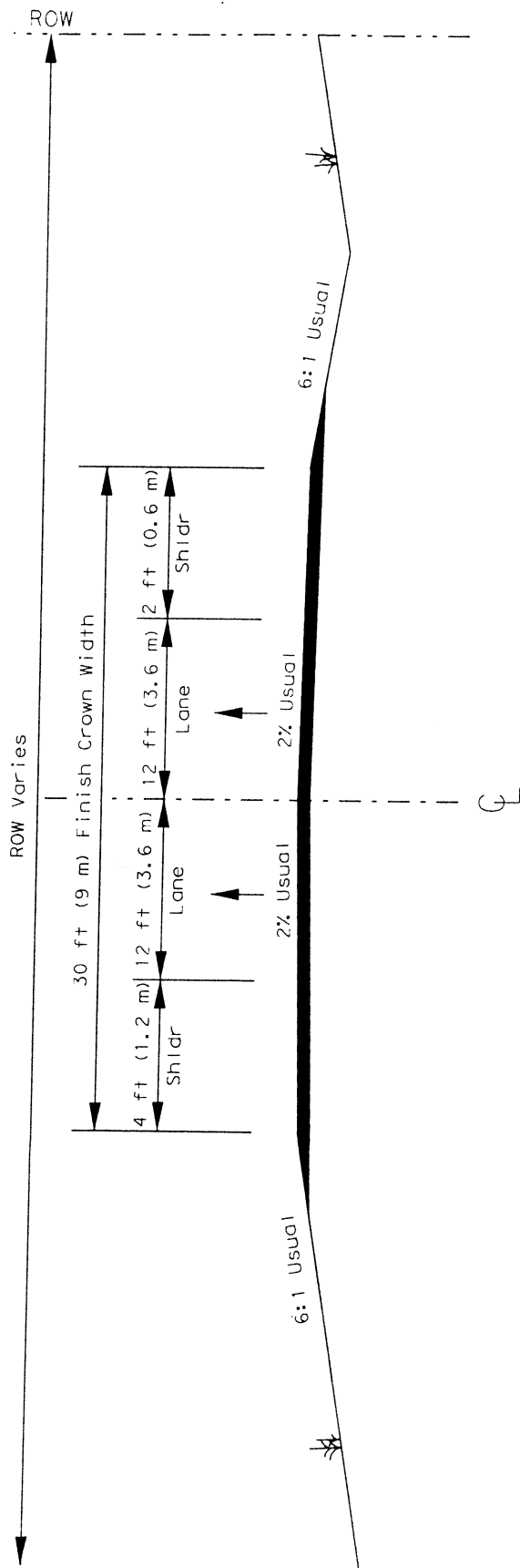




# Existing Typical Section Frontage Road

Not To Scale

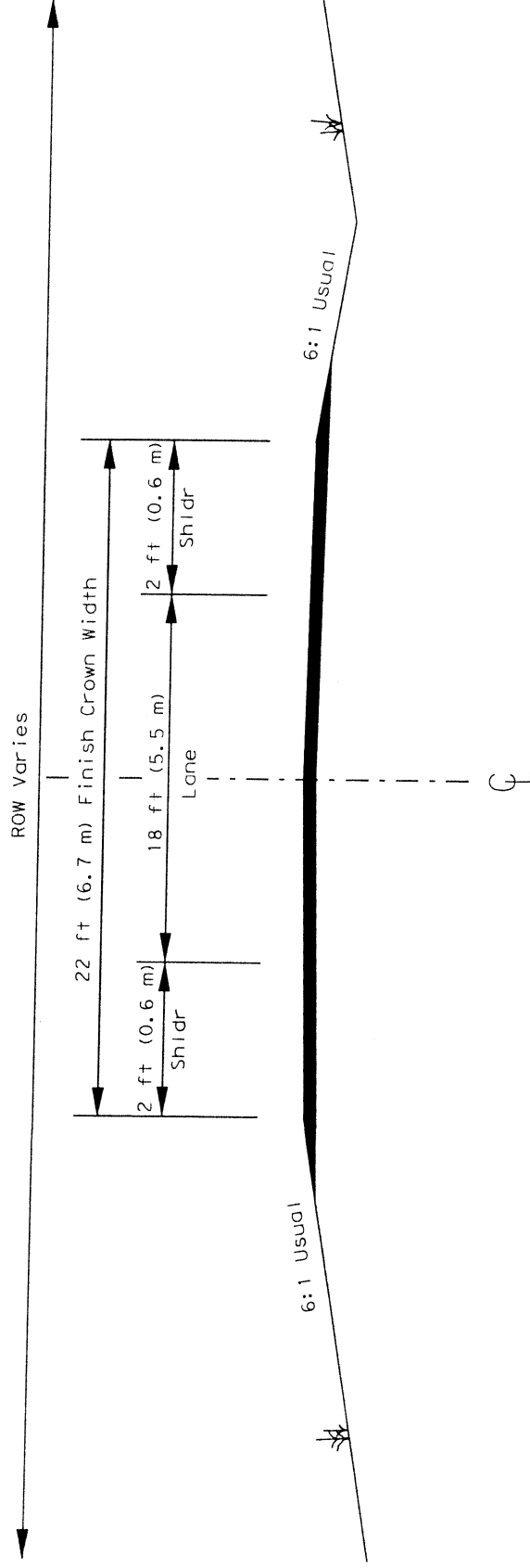
Figure 1



# Proposed Typical Section One-Way Frontage Road

Not To Scale

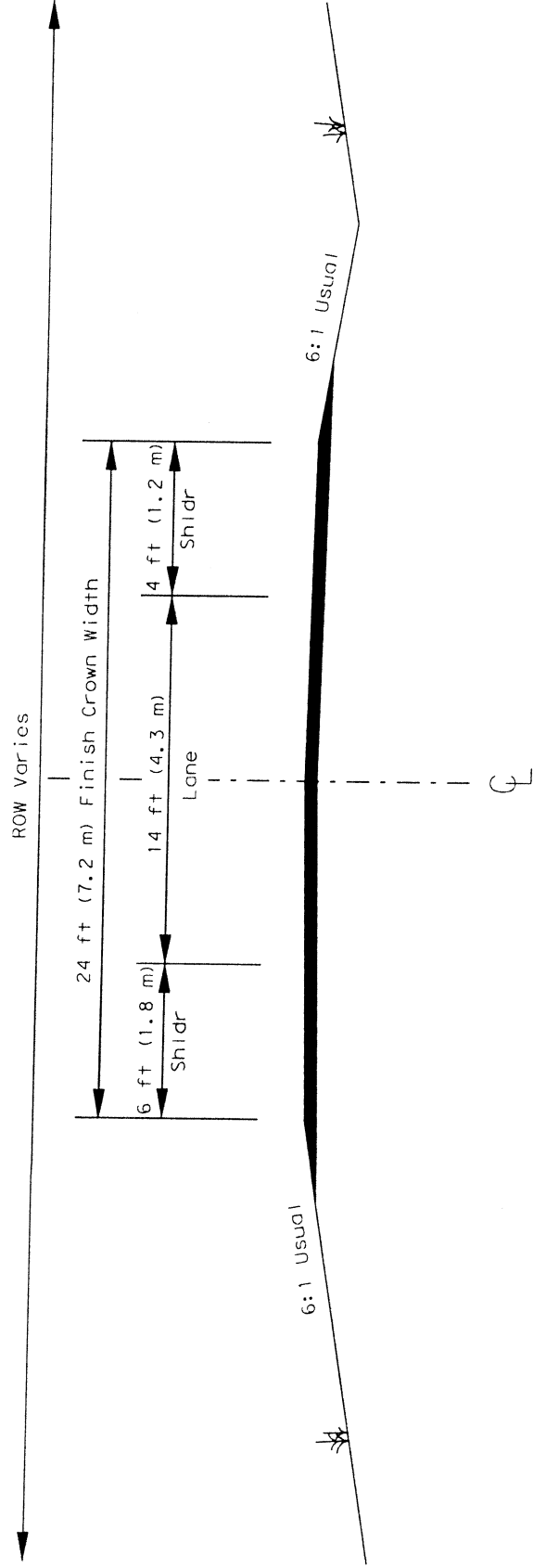
Figure 2



*Existing Typical Section  
Ramp (To be Removed)*

Not To Scale

Figure 3



# Proposed Typical Section New Location Ramp

Not To Scale

Figure 4